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Wann er gefunden ist; die Gunst kan bald erkalten,
 Von dem er hergerührt. Wer darauff Hoffnung setzt,
 Vergleicht sich dem, der Glass für gantz beständig schätzt.

Der mhd. Spruch geht zurück auf den von Gottfried mehrfach benutzten Publilius Syrus (rec. Meyer, Lips. 1880. F. 24, S. 31): *Fortuna vitrea est: tum cum splendet frangitur*.¹ Ein ähnliches Bild gebraucht ferner Hugo von Montfort an einer von Lexer s. v. *söchen* angeführten Stelle: *diu welt ist ein glesîn hûs: der glanz ist bald zerbrochen, daz man muoz gar snel dar ûz und in der erden sochen*.

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STOCKDALE ON GRAY'S PRODUCTIVITY

The first detailed explanation of the meagreness of Gray's literary production has not, I believe, been noticed by scholars. In view of the perennial interest in the problem it seems worth while to call attention to the following passage in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Genuine Laws of Poetry* by Percival Stockdale, London, 1778, pp. 95 ff.

"The small number, and size of the excellent productions with which Mr. Gray hath enriched our English Poetry, prove that his talents were checked by an unreasonable, whimsical, and insuperable difficulty of being satisfied with his own compositions; and by an unmanly timidity to appear, in the character of an Authour, before a generous publick, with whom the defects, and errors of a Poem will never occasion any material disgust, if in that Poem, the true poetical spirit is predominant. These inferences are more evidently proved from those premises, if we consider that He passed the greater part of his life in a celebrated seat of the Muses; that He was not dissipated, and licentious, but collected, and studious; and that his mind, was, therefore, not chilled, and embarrassed by poverty; but free from that indigence, and those anxieties, by which poetical genius is commonly depressed, and persecuted; partly, from the misconduct which is produced by strong sensibility and passions; and partly, from fortune's inflexible, and stupid aversion to learning, and to wit. From his minute, superstitious, and false delicacy of taste; from his timorous pride, in venturing forth as a writer; from the uncouth, and un-

¹ Georges, *Lat.-Deutsches Handwbch.*, gibt s. v. vitreus eine deutsche Übersetzung: Glück und Glas, wie bald bricht das. Ferner zitiert er aus *Angustin de civ. dei*: laetitia (vitrea), zerbrechliche wie Glas (=vergängliche). Vgl. ferner *Kleinere Schriften von W. Wackernagel*, I, 243.

affecting subjects, and images, to which He frequently has recourse; from the surprizing inequality, which, in his different productions, is very sensibly felt by every unprejudiced, and true critick; and from the labour with which most of his Poems are stiffly characterized;—from these principles I likewise conclude, that there was a langour, and effeminacy in his mental frame; that his Muse was often deaf to his invocation; that the current of his fancy was often weakened, contracted, and obstructed, by some constitutional poverty, and frost; and that his best compositions were the effects of a temporary, but fortunate sunshine, and warmth of soul, producing as happy a sympathy with those objects which were most correspondent with his mind; more than of an essential, and permanent brightness, and ardour of genius. This observation will neither seem invidious, nor imaginary to Those who reflect that the human mind, is, in different persons, complicated, and diversified to an infinite variety; and that greater poets than Mr. Gray have their conspicuous master-pieces; though they may not outshine their other works with so preeminent a lustre as the famous Elegy, written in a Country-church-yard, excells other Poems of the same Authour."

It will be noted that Stockdale anticipates in a striking manner subsequent explanations¹ of the poet's slender production.

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"DITAMY," *Endymion*, I, 555

The spelling, "ditamy," has puzzled the editors of Keats. Buxton Forman, in his footnote on this passage writes:

"In the manuscript and in the first edition we read *ditamy*. I have not succeeded in finding the orthography elsewhere; but I see no reason for doubting that Keats met with it somewhere and preferred it to *dittany*. In Philemon Holland's Pliny, where it might have been expected to occur, I can find no more English equivalent for *dictamnus* than *dictamne*; but it is worth noting that three modern languages drop the *n* and not the *m*—thus Italian *dittamo*, Spanish *dictamo*, and French *dictame*; and in a time when spelling was more or less optional some classical English writer may well have done the same." The N. E. D., however, does not list Keats' spelling, although it does give *dittamy* as a seventeenth century form. And no other editor, so far as I have been able to ascertain, has improved on Forman's suggestion.

¹For a convenient summary of these explanations, see Professor C. S. Northup's edition of Gray's *Essays and Criticisms*, 1911, Introd. pp. xxii-xxvii.